

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

The Abstract has been replaced responsive to the Official Actions objection.

The specification has been amended to include section headings and correct typographic errors.

The previously pending claims have been replaced with new claims that take into account the formal and substantive rejections of the Official Action.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under §101 as being drawn to non-statutory subject matter.

Applicants appreciate the criticisms and comments concerning recitations necessary to satisfy §101.

The new claims have been drafted to positively recite the steps involved in the claimed method, and to positively recite tangible aspects thereof.

The claims now clearly require creating rules, creating a pair of markets with a market of origin which is defined as the geographic zone of departure of the trip and a destination market which is defined as the geographic zone of arrival of the trip, storing the defined markets in a database on a computer readable medium; and storing the created rules in a database on another computer readable medium.

Thus, the claim clearly recites the positive steps of creating rules and markets, and the positive steps of storing

which storing steps store both the defined markets and defined rules in a database on a computer readable medium.

These amendments are believed to bring the claims into compliance with §101. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore solicited.

The new claims remedy the stated basis of rejection under section 112, first paragraph. See also the disclosure at specification page 4, lines 1-4 and the chart on page 10, which clearly show that applicants had possession of the claimed features. Claims 12-13 are based on claim 2. Withdrawal of this rejection is solicited.

Certain claims were rejected under §112, second paragraph.

As discussed above, claim 11 now clearly recites active, positive steps.

"These types" has been removed from the claims.

"Content of the rule" has been clarified.

A rule is made of two parts: a criteria section and a content section.

The criteria enable the determination of the rule to apply and comprises a market pair definition along with, preferably, additional criteria.

The content may describe information such as a traffic restriction code, a number of industrial application like travel industry.

The content of the rule is accordingly not specific to the invention. It is not a weight but rather a standard code which can be understood by the user (for example, "business" in the case of content related to class definition or K, W or else in case of traffic restriction codes as explained in the specification).

The weight values as depicted on page 18 are the weight of the additional criteria of the rule that is the criteria preferably used in addition to the market pair criteria to select the rule to apply. The weights are not the rules content. The content of the rules is more specifically described on page 7, line 20 to page 8, lines 22.

As to the terms "agree" and "agreeing market", see specification page 4, next to last line; page 5, lines 11, 17; etc. showing that "agree" is used in the specification. Also see the two paragraphs spanning pages 10-11:

M1 = London + France, if the acquisition carried out by an input user is: Charles de Gaulle airport, the market M1 agrees with the search criterion with a priority value of 4 because the Charles de Gaulle airport agrees with the definition of country: France whose priority rank for this type of geographical zone is 4.

If there is considered a user input during a search operation corresponding to the Heathrow airport, the market 1 agrees with the priority value of 2 because the Heathrow airport is included in the geographical region of London which is a type of geographic zone having a priority rank of 2.

From the clear language of the specification and the examples provided, it is clear one skilled in the art would

understand what the term "agree" means. In the examples immediately above, the user input of Heathrow airport agrees with any geographic zone that includes Heathrow airport, e.g., Heathrow airport itself, London (the city in which Heathrow airport is found), England (the country in which Heathrow airport is found). Thus, the term "agree" is believed definite.

Claim 10 has been cancelled.

Withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection is solicited.

Although claims 1-8 were listed as being rejected as anticipated by CAPPELLINI 2003/0014286, only claims 1, 2, 6, 7-8 are addressed. Claims 3-4 were rejected as obvious over CAPPELLINI in view of CHAMPERNOWNE 2002/143587.

Claim 5 does not appear to have been substantively rejected.

Neither of the substantive rejections is believed viable.

The prior art only teaches path searching, after a request has specified a trip origin and destination. The prior art neither discloses nor suggests rules of a reservation database where the rules include geographic zones defined by market pairs.

More specifically, neither reference teaches nor suggests rules that include, as one criterion used for selection of a trip, a market pair, the market pair comprising i) an origin market defining a geographic zone of departure of the

trip, and ii) a destination market defining a geographic zone of arrival of the trip.

See the further recitations in claim 11 of storing the created rules in a database, and accessing the stored rules in response to a reservation request.

Rules comprising of market definitions based on geographic zone types is not in the prior art.

CAPPELLINI only teaches the well-known process of finding among a universe of available transportation capabilities, those capabilities that when arranged in a sequential combination can provide a solution to the requested trip, where the origin and destination locations have been specified.

CAPPELLINI, however, does not teach rules depending on geographical locations of different type as found in the present claims. As noted, CAPPELLINI only discloses how to check whether a succession of paths satisfies the specified origin and destination locations. There is no disclosure or suggestion of rules which themselves include defined market pairs.

The obviousness rejection appears to acknowledge this fact. CHAMPERNOWNE also fails to teach including the market pair within each rule. The teachings as to priority queues are not sufficient to render this feature obvious. Nor is the general concept of priority queues motivation to realize the specific method as claimed by the dependent claims.

A review of the invention may prove useful.

See the claimed features of calculating the priority for each market pair (claims 16-17). As per the specification, there can be obtained the value of the priority of a pair of markets by simple addition of priority values of each market constituting it. Consider the example pair:

FRANCE - NICE + GREAT BRITAIN → NEW ZEALAND + SYDNEY + MELBOURNE.

The place of origin entered by the user, CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT, will obtain a value of priority of the origin market of 4 (rank of the geographic zone FRANCE, see page 10 showing country type of geographic zone having a priority rank of 4). Moreover, for the destination of the SYDNEY airport, the destination market will have a priority value of 1 (SYDNEY corresponding to the priority rank of the AIRPORT geographic zone type). As a result, the value of priority of the pair of markets thus constituted is equal to  $4 + 1 = 5$ .

Neither applied reference teaches this claimed feature of the invention.

See also claim 18 and the following concerning additional criteria for the selection of the trip being within the defined and stored rule, as well as there being a value assigned to each additional search criteria based on a degree of importance, and a total weight of each rule being a total of the weights assigned to the additional criteria. Also see claim 19.

As per the specification, to refine the selection, there are preferably used additional criteria which form an

integral part the rule, with a weight assigned to each additional criterion so as to define its degree of importance. See the disclosed example of additional criteria:

Additional criteria	Weight
Flight group	64
Type of occupation sharing	32
Flight period	16
Day of the week	8
Type of aircraft	4
Time of departure	2
Flight duration	1

As disclosed, a set of criteria associated with a rule can comprise a combination of additional criteria such as have been given above. The total weight of the additional criteria assigned to a rule corresponds to the sum of the individual weights of these criteria. For a rule whose sole additional criterion is the *flight group*, the total weight is 64. This weight is thus greater than that of a rule whose additional criteria are *flight period* + *day of the week* + *departure time of the flight* (whose weight is  $16+8+2 = 26$ ). See the example rules on specification page 18..

Thus, as input, the user acquires a pair of locations corresponding to the location of origin and the location of destination desired for his search. At this point, there is

required from the server 2 the list of pairs of markets corresponding to the acquired criteria as well as their priority value. The rules corresponding to these pairs of markets are opened, which agree for the type of information sought. It is thus determined the weight of the additional criteria for each rule to define the total weight of the rule.

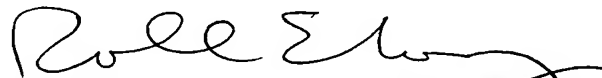
In that the prior art does not teach or suggest the combination of claimed features, all the claims are believed allowable. Allowance of all the claims is therefore solicited.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

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APPENDIX:

The Appendix includes the following item:

- new Abstract of the Disclosure